

# Light:

*A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.*

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

"WHATEVER LOTH MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT.—Paul.

No. 212.—VOL. V.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 24, 1885.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

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[The Editor of "LIGHT" desires it to be distinctly understood that he can accept no responsibility as to the opinions expressed by Contributors and Correspondents. Free and courteous discussion is invited, but writers are alone responsible for the articles to which their names are attached.]

## ESOTERIC AND EXOTERIC BUDDHISM.

BY WILLIAM OXLEY.

The importance of the following remarks must be my justification for again bringing this subject before the readers of "LIGHT." In my former article I gave facts which showed what Buddhism really is in the countries where it has its home; and the question raised by a knowledge of the facts there adduced is, Does that system of religion give to its votaries a means conducive to their well-being in the life that now is, and elevate them in the scale of morality and intellectuality? Judging by the well-known saying "that a tree is known by its fruits," the response, from our point of view, can scarcely be favourable. What concerns us, whether as Christians, or Spiritualists, or truthseekers, is the claims that are advanced by the leaders of the Theosophical Society on behalf of the esoteric side of the Buddhistic system of philosophy as being the repository of the "True Wisdom Religion," and also that its leaders and promoters are the custodians of all but absolute truth in relation to the Cosmos, &c. Whatever the Mahatmas themselves may be in their specific religious proclivities, it is an undoubted fact that the principal founders and active workers in the Theosophical movement are Buddhists pure and simple; and however wide the latitude given to the members of this Society for the upholding of their own specific religious, or other views, yet the Buddhistic school of thought is held up as the purest and best, and far above any that is known to Western minds. It is this phase and this representation that chiefly concern us as searchers for pure and undefiled truth. The law of evolution has been at work, resulting in the elevation of human mentality—especially in Christendom—to a degree that the stagnant East neither understands nor appreciates; and from the Mahatmas downward all reckon without their host if they think that their claims and pretensions will pass unchallenged. So far as the Occident is concerned, the day has gone for ever in which dogmatic assumptions and declarations will pass for accepted truths and infallible wisdom. It is not now my object to deal with their doctrines, theories, and system of ethics; but rather to lift the veil, in order that the practical working of the Buddhistic system in its headquarters may be seen and known.

I pointed out in my last article that the doctrine of the living Buddhas, by which is meant the re-incarnation of Buddha himself, in personal form continuously upon this earth, and others of lesser degree, is the corner-stone of the system.

The brilliant expositor of Mahatmal Theosophy (Mr. Sinnett) does not leave us in any doubt on this matter, for he says (see "Esoteric Buddhism," p. 142), "the re-incarnations of the Dalai and Teshu Lamas in Thibet, at which travellers only laugh for want of the knowledge that might enable them to sift fact from fancy, is a sober scientific achievement." This is clear and unmistakable; and in other parts of the same chapter the learned author tells us how the re-incarnation is effected, by means of "the selection of a child-body," which, if true at all, is a worse edition of the cuckoo ejecting the hedge-sparrow, for in such a case it is ejecting the spirit which had built up a tenement for itself, and forcibly taking possession of the house built for another by its own labour. Surely Mr. Sinnett or his teachers must have overlooked this, or they would scarcely have presented the exemplification of the doctrine of the re-incarnation in this form. What conceivable right has the Lord Buddha, his successors, or the Adepts, to appropriate a living temple erected for, and by, another spirit atom of life, for their own specific manifestation and use? In such a case we cannot, and will not admit that the end justifies the means.

Apart from the truth, or otherwise, of the theory as put forth by the mouthpiece of the Mahatmas or Adepts, I now propose to supply details of the actual working of this doctrine, as it is exemplified in the persons of the Grand Lamas of Thibet, who are the Pontiffs of the Buddhistic Church. In plain terms, I will give the other side of the picture, which is withheld, either from ignorance or design. According to the evidence which I now adduce, and which is open to challenge if it can be disproved, it is not the defunct Adept, or dying Buddha, who "selects the new child body" to re-incarnate in, but the Chinese Government! and, unless it is admitted that a secular and politic Government Council is gifted with a Divine wisdom, then it relegates the whole affair to a fraudulent imposition of the grossest kind. Strong as the judgment is, I leave it to the reader, after reading what follows, to say if it is any too strong.

As shown in my previous paper, and admitted by friend and foe alike, the grand central doctrine on which Buddhism as a system of thought and religion rests is, "The Living Buddhas," which means the continuous existence on this earth, by a succession of re-incarnations, of the Lord Buddha himself, and others of lesser note, as well as the Adepts. The issue is clearly drawn; and if it can be shown that this basic doctrine is questionable, and undemonstrable to fair criticism and scientific test, then it follows that the whole system, its philosophy included, is nothing more than speculation, and undeserving of acceptance by those who will and must have a standard of truth that is unassailable.

To any but partisans, and to those who have made themselves acquainted with the actual working of the system, the first surprise is to find how extremely modern it is, i.e., in relation to the now accepted faith in the continuous re-incarnations. What might have been known, or is alleged to have been known by the founder and his successors, it was not until about 1450 A.D. that it became the corner-stone of the system. It was then that Tsong-Ka-pa, who, Mr. Sinnett informs us, was the third incarnation of Guatama Buddha, appeared on the scene. Buddhist apologists say that this third re-incarnation of the Lord Buddha was for the purpose (in plain English) of reforming the occult

fraternity, which at that period had lost much of its pristine occult vigour, if not morality. But an uninitiated conscientious historian, unacquainted with metaphysical subtleties, puts it down as a bold and so far successful attempt by this Church reformer, "to secure for the hierarchy of his own Church the perpetual succession of spiritual and temporal sovereignty."\*

It is unnecessary to treat of the history of Thibet, but it is sufficient to say that probably from time immemorial its capital and rulers have been to Buddhism what Rome is to the Christian system, and that the Grand Lamas are the Buddhistic Supreme Heads of the Church. In 1542 A.D., i.e., about 100 years after the era of Tsong-Ka-pa, the present Tatsing dynasty, having completed the conquest of China, turned their attention to Thibet, and the two then Grand Lamas tendered their allegiance, since which time the Government of Peking has retained the supreme tutelage of the Buddhistic hierarchy of Thibet. "Since the middle of the last century the Chinese Government placed the whole conduct of Thibetan affairs, *both spiritual and temporal*, into the hands of a council consisting of the two Grand Lamas and four laymen, under the supervision of two Chinese commissioners." What this involves will be seen presently, for the latter, representing the Chinese Government, are the real powers, both in Church and State, in Thibet, and even the two Grand Lamas are but mere puppets in their hands.

From what is advanced by Mr. Sinnett, as the advocate of the "sober scientific fact" of the re-incarnation of the Grand Lamas, who are presumed to be Adepts of the highest order, it would seem that the dying Buddhas "select their own child-bodies" for the purpose of re-incarnating themselves again into earth-life. But this is totally at variance with the real facts of the case, for the "selection" is by the Chinese Government, which is made from a greater or lesser number of claimants. It is impossible to square the two accounts, and the inference is obvious. The machinery employed for the discovery of the "selected child-body" is as follows:—"The selection is made from a large number of infants whose birth concided with the death of the respective pontiff, provided that such birth was connected with auspicious signs favouring an artificial analogy with the spiritual characteristics of the vacant office. As the decision upon such analogies naturally produced disputes on each occasion, the Chinese Government easily managed to obtain the right of ultimate decision as to the eligible candidates for the vacant office."

But this is not all, for the astute Government of Peking is equal to any occasion where a difficult problem has to be solved by—policy! Perhaps the greatest surprise to the ordinary mind will be to discover that the ultimate decision of the "selected child-body" is *determined by a lottery!* which scheme was devised by the Chinese Emperor in 1792 A.D. The *modus operandi* is as follows:—"The infant 'candidates' brought forward by the priesthood, and their respective problematic claims to be an incarnation of the deceased dignitary, are submitted first to the Chinese Commissioners, who, in turn, refer the matter to the Peking Government, along with their recommendations. A large number of names are submitted, from which the Chinese Government select a few. These names are inscribed on wooden tablets, and deposited in a golden urn; and the child whose name is first drawn forth from the urn is forthwith, under public acclamation, solemnly enthroned by the clergy as the re-embodiment of the deceased dignitary."

In face of these facts, what becomes of the Esoteric theory that the Buddhas and Adepts "select their own child-bodies"? But the Government of the Chinese Celestial Empire goes further than this, for it claims the

right to prevent any re-incarnations if it chooses so to do, for "some time ago the Chinese Government, wishing to abolish a certain high office in Thibet, *did it*, on the decease of the last occupant, by simply issuing an Imperial edict, actually published in the *Peking Gazette*, informing the Thibetan Pontificate that 'His Majesty the Emperor of China had been pleased to forbid the deceased dignitary *for ever* the privilege of reappearing again on earth in human form.'"

It is too great a draft on our credulity to credit the Chinese Government with any higher motives than State policy, and to suppose that the "selected child-body," after having run the gauntlet, first, of the priesthood; then of the two Chinese Commissioners; and again of the Government of Peking; and finally the turn up of the lottery bag—I say, if the original "selected child-body" by the dying Buddha, or Adepts, successfully passes through these ordeals and eventually should be the one known to the Adepts beforehand, it may be regarded as a miracle of miracles. Scepticism as to this cannot be regarded other than quite justifiable.

When the corruption, intrigues, conflicting claims of the "selected" infants, or their parents, which this wretched affair involves, are thus laid open to public scrutiny, who, amongst cultured and intelligent people, can regard the whole thing otherwise than as a scandalous imposition, perpetrated for the purpose of supporting the pretensions of an arrogant hierarchy?

I maintain, notwithstanding the attempts made by the advocates of Mahatmal Theosophy to show to the contrary, that Exoteric Buddhism is the flowering out, or external manifestation, of what they are pleased to call Esoteric Buddhism; and that the one is to the other what the personality is to the individuality of the man or woman.

The "facts" which I have given show the straits that Exoteric Buddhism is reduced to, in order to give a plausible colouring to the cardinal doctrine of re-incarnation, and what it actually is in practice; and, did opportunity permit, it would not be a difficult undertaking to show the weakness, and more than weakness, of this doctrinal theory as presented from the esoteric side; for unless it can be proved by "sober scientific fact" to rest upon surer foundations than the examples given—which are fathered by the brilliant mouthpiece of the alleged Himalayan Adepts—then the cultured minds of the Occident are doing the right thing in rejecting the claims, and along with the claims the whole philosophy of the system, put forth on behalf of those hitherto unseen and unknown (except by the favoured few) custodians of occult wisdom and powers. Occult truth does not require bolstering up by questionable means; and to use unnecessary mystification, when the cultivated intellects of the age are rightly demanding the abandonment of the now obsolete methods of the past, which, instead of liberating the mass from the bondage of ignorance, have been used for the purpose of enslaving the many to the few, is to persist in a course which all lovers of liberty will reject and resist. How can they do otherwise with a system that commences on its esoteric side, theoretically, with the theft of a ready-made child-body, and finishes on its exoteric side with a transparent fraud?

It is quite open for the leaders of the Theosophical movement to challenge, and even deny, the statements I have given (which are only a small part); but such denial, to be of any practical value, must be accompanied by *proof* that the statements are incorrect; because this is a question—not of the superiority, or otherwise, of doctrinal teaching, but of actual fact. I have given my authority, and here I leave it to the thoughtful consideration of those whom it may concern.

Higher Broughton, Manchester.  
December 13th, 1884.

\* These quotations are taken from a work entitled "Three Lectures on Buddhism," by Ernest J. Tubing, Ph. D. (Trubner and Co., 1884), to which valuable work the reader is referred for further details.



### "MATTER THROUGH MATTER."

I apologise to Dr. Wyld for having represented him as carrying about one ring, instead of a series of rings; but I cannot quite admit that his correction of me on this matter is "important." My point was simply that the particular ring, which was the subject of experiment in the case under debate, may have been examined, and so imitated. So far from denying the possibility of such examination, Dr. Wyld expressly admits it, the medium having actually been allowed to take the ring home with him. This fact was not mentioned in Dr. Wyld's first account—surely a very grave omission. As regards the markings, (1) I do not see the difficulty of imitating "1,000 minute markings, some of them as small as pin-points," for a person who has a pin and a few hours at his disposal; and (2) before admitting that imitation would have had to be carried to such a pitch of minuteness I should need to know whether Dr. Wyld actually adopted the only course which would give any relevance to his mention of these minute markings—whether he made a complete chart of the marks, before committing the ring to the medium, and assured himself that the ring on the medium's wrist was similarly marked, by comparing it *in situ* with his chart. To regard the identification of the ring that fell on the floor as sufficient would, of course, be to assume that that ring was the one found on the medium's wrist—as to which I shall have a word to say further on. Still it would be interesting to know whether the chart came into play even at that later stage.

*Apropos* of his committing the ring to the medium, as well as on the subsequent point about not getting his friends to test the condition of the medium's arm, Dr. Wyld uses language which implies that, though I may not see the wisdom of his acting as he did, better judges would. There is here a certain confusion of thought. I was criticising not his wisdom, or his knowledge of Spiritualism, but his evidence that a certain event had taken place. I should be the last to deny that unusual phenomena may demand peculiar conditions. It may quite be the case that, to obtain this particular phenomenon, certain measures were necessary, and that Dr. Wyld did well to adopt them. If the measures happen to be such as cannot but militate against obtaining conclusive evidence, it is, of course, not his fault; but neither is it mine, if I point out that they *have* so militated.

I do not know whether Dr. Wyld means his excuse for not having explored the medium's nude arm up to the elbow to be taken seriously. He says: "The medium wore a shirt and a coat sleeve, and to remove these while I held his left hand would have been a feat requiring the presence of the Davenport Brothers." "Removal" of these impediments to the extent which permits the passage of a hand up to the elbow is a feat which I have just performed with my own left hand on my own right arm; and which I shall be happy to repeat on either of Dr. Wyld's arms, while grasping the hand that belongs to it. Success depends on unfastening the sleeve-link of the shirt—an operation in which I should have thought that Dr. Wyld must have had nightly practice for many years.

To his next remark I take no particular exception. He is perfectly convinced, by the evidence of his own tactile and muscular sensations, that he clasped the medium's left hand throughout; and he says that I—had the experience been mine—would have had a similar conviction. I not only admit, but I expressly urge, that there is a certain quality in the evidence of one's own healthy senses which nothing can quite replace. I therefore did not complain of Dr. Wyld's personal conviction: my criticism of his account was entirely from the point of view of *evidence*.

And since he asks me whether I should "have been much affected," had his friends supplemented his examination of the arm, I reply that I should have regarded the evidence as very decidedly improved by their corroboration.

With respect to the dimensions of the ring and the wrist, it is probable that my mode of expression was faulty, since "C. C. M.," as well as Dr. Wyld, has misunderstood me. My meaning was not that an item of evidence, however inconclusive, could render other independent items less conclusive; but that when one finds stress laid on an inconclusive point, one's view of the witness's general competence as an investigator is thereby affected; and in that way the case, which is only known to outsiders through his investigation, is in a true sense weakened. It is, I think, beyond dispute that persons exist who can pass their hands through a band which pretty closely encircles their wrists; and the hypothesis which I threw out was not therefore—as "C. C. M." supposes—a mere vague suggestion, without relation to ascertained facts. On the contrary, the relation is a very close one; and the compressibility which I suggested is, I submit, "at least approximate" to what might antecedently be supposed possible. I am not aware, it is true, that the feat I have mentioned has ever been performed when the band was of rigid metal; but in the present case, the metal must have been very far from *fitting closely* round the wrist; since Dr. Wyld seems to have been able, while it was still encircling the limb, to suspend it by a string and make it ring with a blow.

On the other matter with which "C. C. M." is chiefly occupied—the hypothesis that the hand which Dr. Wyld held may have been changed—my difference from him, if it exists, is of the slightest. But, however near to certainty a single test brings us, another independent test must surely bring us a little nearer. May I not then mildly remark that "one would be glad to know," not only that Dr. Wyld clasped the hand tightly, but that he ascertained throughout that it was the left hand, by the position of the thumb?

Finally, "C. C. M." thinks that the case is of high evidential value. Had I not thought the same, I should not have considered it worth writing about. But my view is now, I admit, a little modified. It must be remembered that my former criticism went almost entirely on the assumption that the ring found on the medium's wrist was really Dr. Wyld's ring. But the opportunities for imitation which Dr. Wyld's reply has revealed make me feel that this point is somewhat more doubtful than at first appeared. "C. C. M." remarks that it is unimportant, "provided the dimensions are the same, and the rim of the ring found is ascertained to be perfectly solid." But to ascertain these facts would require a very careful examination of the ring *in situ*. The only evidence adduced is that Dr. Wyld and his friends could not remove it, which might very well be; and that it rang when struck. But sounds are the most uncertain things to judge of; and I certainly should hesitate to place reliance on a test of this sort, unless such a blow was struck as must certainly have seriously endangered the encircled wrist. Afterwards, we are told, as the party "all walked about in the light, the ring fell off from the medium's wrist." Now can Dr. Wyld add that he kept the medium's wrist under close observation, and saw the ring quit it? If so, the case for the identity of the rings will be considerably strengthened. At the same time, it is clear that we have now passed well within the bounds of possible sleight of hand; and "C. C. M.'s" remarks on the fallacies of visual observation, and on an expert's powers of diverting the attention, are exactly in point. Supposing the encircling ring to have been so constructed as to open and shut in some secret way, it could be no great feat for a conjurer, while "walking about in the light," to remove it, and simultaneously to drop another ring in such a way as to

produce the impression that the latter had fallen from his wrist.

I am not expressing an opinion that this was what took place. But Dr. Wyld has described his experiment as a *demonstration* of the passage of matter through matter; and that is a word which cannot be too carefully used. I rejoice to learn that the experiment is to be repeated; and I hope that Dr. Wyld's energy and perseverance may have their fullest reward.—I am, &c.,

EDMUND GURNEY.

To students of occult phenomena the ring experiment as mentioned by Dr. Wyld is no novelty. With Mr. Husk, rings and other objects are passed on his arm at almost every séance held, either at his own residence or with private circles. I think that but for Mr. Gurney's remarks the subject would have provoked little or no controversy, as the majority of Spiritualists have witnessed the ring test to their own satisfaction; that is to say, they have found on the wrist of the medium a ring which, besides being too narrow to pass over his hand, was previously deposited on the table, examined by every one present, and found to be perfectly solid. I have, thus far, witnessed the same results over and over again, and am personally convinced that no fraud or trickery is practised. In fact, I have met with other somewhat similar tests, which appear to be far more conclusive than even Dr. Wyld's experience. However, the question as to whether the arm passes through the ring or the ring through the arm, has never been settled. And although no amount of criticism would shake the belief of some Spiritualists that the ring really passes through the flesh, no one has ever seen the operation. Yet, at the same time, the critical remarks of Mr. Gurney are received with an amount of surprise that would be only justifiable were the whole world convinced of the reality of "matter passing through matter." Mr. Gurney's opinion that "in these matters it is impossible to place implicit reliance on the report of a single sense of a single person" is, to my experience in séance-room mysteries, but too well founded; especially as far as the sense of sight is concerned. Of course I do not refer to the sight of a pitch dark room, but to the respective powers of observation of those examining the forms and objects that can be seen by means of the luminous slate.

As to the senses of hearing and of touch, every one in the habit of sitting in total darkness will be aware of the difficulty in localising sound, and in discovering the nature of the object one touches, or by which one may be touched. Dr. Wyld's case may be sufficiently clear to those who have themselves witnessed similar occurrences, though to others of no such experience, the mere suggestion of a ring (not a trick-ring) being passed through the human wrist, must sound like a joke, and naturally so, since the actual passage of matter through matter never has been witnessed, or been proven.

Were it not for a certain amount of opposition which the spiritualistic theory must unavoidably encounter, Spiritualists would but too readily assume that, with their experience of occult phenomena, they were at the same time the sole possessors of infallible knowledge respecting their cause, origin, and *modus operandi*. Fair, and even unfair, criticism has at least the advantage of causing us more thoroughly to consider our facts before we attempt to explain them. As far as the ring experiment goes, it seems to me that either the arm or the substance of the ring must have been temporarily disintegrated, merely because we have no other means of explaining the mystery. But what do we know of the phenomenon itself except the visible results? Nothing. No one present during such an experiment sees how the ring comes to be transferred to the wrist. Now, how can any person in his right senses expect an outsider to believe the statements of those who *did not see* what really took place? Nor even

could those who successfully conducted the experiment reasonably claim a scientific discovery. For science does not and cannot trouble itself with the observation of mere results, obtained no one knows how. Science wants to learn the *cause*. It requires to know *whether* matter does pass through matter, and if so, how it does pass. Even were the ring test sufficiently established as a fact, we would be *then* only at the beginning of a scientific investigation, and on the point of entry of a fresh field of inquiry, viz., How is it done?

Unless the very process be observed there can be no other fact established than the fact of having to deal with a tremendous puzzle.

Dr. Wyld expresses his hope that Mr. Husk might by practice produce the ring experiment in a lighted room; "the hands of the operators and the rings only being in darkness." What, may I ask, would be gained by this? If Mr. Husk would sit in *darkness* with the hands and the rings in the *light*, one might entertain some hope of success. Now this *can* be done. "Irresistible" informs me that it is not impossible to exhibit the "passage" by the luminous slate! But, says my informant, "I cannot do so now, it depends on the conditions, but I think it can, under favourable circumstances, be accomplished."

I need not say what delight it will afford me to witness so stupendous a phenomenon, and sincerely hope both Mr. Gurney and Dr. Wyld will, on that occasion, share my experience. But to return to Dr. Wyld's remark (second portion of fourth paragraph, p. 25), as regards the ring falling to the floor when the hand was placed behind the window curtain.

Does Dr. Wyld overlook the fact that in his friend's case the ring was taken off, not put on? I must call his attention to the well-known theory that the process of fixing the ring on the wrist and the mode of taking it off are considered to be different in their operation, inasmuch as in the first case the medium's wrist is disintegrated, whilst in the second the atoms of the ring are divided. I am aware the information obtained from spirits or trance speakers anent the process of disintegration is somewhat conflicting. Still, as the ring goes on and comes off again, it is only reasonable to pay some attention to what the operators themselves have to say about it. "Irresistible" tells me that the medium, being entranced, feels no pain, and hence the iron ring can be made to go through the flesh. In the second case, the ring drops off because its atoms are divided—an operation which becomes imperative on account of the medium having returned to his normal condition. How far this information is correct no one will be able to tell until the experiment can, as promised, be conducted in the light of the luminous slate.

In conclusion, I may add that on three occasions a ring was passed on Mr. Husk's wrist whilst I held his hand from the beginning until the very end of the séance. These rings had been carefully examined by several present, having for that purpose been placed on the table before the light was extinguished. Once a lady's muff was, during the earlier part of the séance, removed from her lap, and directly afterwards she discovered that something was on her arm; a light was struck, and her arm found inside the muff.

On another occasion I requested "Irresistible" to put a chair over my arm. To make sure of the genuineness of the test, I insisted that the chair to be used should be one of the six bent-wood chairs that still remained unoccupied. I was then asked whether the one upon which I was seated would do. "Then," said "Irresistible," "stand up," and at the same moment my chair was taken away. I felt a soft hand holding my right arm, and then a chair, which came, as far as I can judge, from the medium's arm, was hanging over mine. Some considerable commotion was heard near the medium, which led me to believe that all the unoccupied chairs were being deposited on the medium's person. Legs of chairs kept coming in contact with my head, and the rattling of more chairs was heard somewhere higher up; darkness preventing me finding out exactly where. By this time the medium was bodily lifted upon the table, and immediately afterwards a light was procured, showing Mr. Husk seated on a chair turned with the back to his chest, both his arms through it, one more chair hanging over his arm—the hand of which had never for a second left my grasp.

January 17th, 1885.

J. G. KEULEMANS



## CORRESPONDENCE.

[It is preferable that correspondents should append their names and addresses to communications. In any case, however, these must be supplied to the Editor as a guarantee of good faith.]

## "Money Challenges."

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—There are individuals who seem to be born to find fault with every one and every thing, except with themselves and their own doings. Their criticism may well be met with a shrug of the shoulder. But when serious men like "H. E." in your last issue, protest against something which seems to shock their sense of propriety, however mistaken, an explanation is due. "H. E." finds fault with me for having accepted Mr. Labouchere's challenge. "So many heads, so many judgments," says the good old German proverb; for I have received no end of congratulatory letters, not only from English Spiritualists, but from France and Belgium, for doing that very same thing. "H. E." avers that he has twelve years' experience in Spiritualism; I have *twenty*, and mine has proved to me that the *ultima ratio* of appealing to the pocket of garrulous scoffers is the only thing that will stop their ignorant folly. Seventeen years ago I challenged the facetious Professor Tyndal; he would not pick up my gauntlet, but, like an honest man, has held his peace against Spiritualism ever since. Five years ago I did the same towards Professor Stefanoni, editor of *Il Messaggero*, of Rome, whose language against Spiritualism and the Spiritualists was simply unendurable; he took care, as a wise man, not to risk his 30,000 francs, preferring to hold his tongue, and moreover he has of late published tales in his journal under the title of "A True Ghost Story"! But what has been the result of accepting Mr. Labouchere's challenge? Has not "H. E." observed how *Truth* has at once dismissed its offensive language which for three consecutive weeks it indulged in, *semper crescendo*, against our much esteemed medium, Mr. W. Eglinton! \* Am I to be censured by "H. E." for doing this? And do not these challenges call public attention to the subject and multiply inquiry? If gold is the only argument possessing any value in the eyes of our opponents, we must submit to the necessity of the times and proclaim Spiritualism from the house tops with every honest means in our power. This I intend always doing.—Very truly yours,  
29, Colville-road, Notting Hill, W. G. DAMIANI.  
January 18th, 1885.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Convinced by the reasoning of "H. E." and others whose views I respect, I ask leave of Spiritualists to withdraw my (limited) upholding of those who are willing to accept the wager of battle; my gallant friend Damiani among them.

It was one of the pithy sayings of Daniel O'Connell, "Inconsistency! What is it? Merely saying I am wiser to-day than I was yesterday!"

Let us abjure all such unseemly methods of defending our faith. We can do so without money deposits.

But I hope that in thus ventilating the matter, we shall pave the way to a committee of inquiry—partly named by our opponent—from which will ultimately emanate a "report."—Truly yours,

17th January.

S. C. HALL.

## The Testimonial to Mr. J. J. Morse.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Allow me to express my hearty thanks to yourself and the editor of the *Medium* for the valuable assistance by advertisement and otherwise you have given to the Testimonial Fund of Mr. J. J. Morse. At the same time permit me to take this opportunity of thanking those who have so freely given their services at the concert, as well as those who attended the same on Wednesday, the 14th inst.; and last, though not least, most cordially to thank those who have subscribed to the fund.

I am sure the sympathy and kindly feeling shown in many ways on the occasion of this farewell benefit will not only help Mr. Morse, but will aid our cause, since every kind thought and

\* Signor Damiani is misinformed here. *Truth* has since returned to the attack in terms which differ little from those used in the first articles in that paper. See also paragraph in the next column.

deed which advances Spiritualism will meet with tenfold reward.

Allow me to trespass on your space to acknowledge the subscriptions of Mr. Donaldson, £1; Mrs. Tebb, 10s.; Mr. Haskins, 10s.; Miss Otteley, 10s.; A Friend, 10s.; E. T., 5s.; Mr. Towns, 2s. 6d.; Mrs. Pole, 2s. 6d.; Mr. Thurston, 2s.; Mr. Weeks, 2s.; S. R., 1s. These sums with those acknowledged by Mr. Frank Everitt, in "LIGHT," and the *Medium*, and the proceeds of the concert, amounted to £47 10s. 6d. The purse was presented to Mr. Morse by Mr. Donaldson on the occasion of the concert.—I am, sir, yours truly,

AGNES F. MALTBY.

## REVIEWS.

EGYPT, AND THE WONDERS OF THE LAND OF THE PHARAOKS.

By William Oxley.—London: Trübner and Co.; price 7s. 6d.; or may be obtained direct from the Psychological Press, 4, Ave Maria-lane, E.C.

This book comes very opportunely just now, when the eyes of Europe and the civilised world are fixed upon Egypt and her affairs. Without, however, entering into a discussion of the perplexing political problems relating to this marvellous country, we may say that Mr. Oxley finds in her past history a full promise of her future destiny. This he foreshadows in glowing terms, when "Britain, having made use of her opportunity, seizes Egypt for her own good and for the good and happiness of millions of human beings who will only be too glad to welcome her presence and her power." Whether this future, which, with prophetic eye, Mr. Oxley sees before a land once rich, powerful, and great, but now, through misrule, anarchy, and despotism, one of the waste places of the earth, will be realised, who can say?

The chief interest of the book to our readers lies in the insight which Mr. Oxley brings to bear upon his subject. He claims that Egypt, her monuments, her history, and her destiny can only be rightly gauged and understood in the light of spiritual science. He strikes his own keynote in the following sentence, and we cannot better explain the *motif* of the book than in his own words. He says: "Without the recognition of this element (Psychology) in ancient Egyptian society, the more than half remained unknown; and my chief object in publishing this work is to attract attention to this part of the social, political, and especially religious economy of Egypt, the elements of which in past centuries have been so deeply entwined in our own history." Following out this idea, an interesting and capable book has been written, and the author is to be congratulated on the success he has achieved. The chapters on Egyptian Magic and Spiritualism are especially interesting, and although we are far from endorsing all Mr. Oxley says—especially in regard to the Osirian origin of Christianity—yet we feel we can cordially commend the work for its fair and truth-seeking spirit. We, of course, regard the book as of value from the especial standpoint of a Spiritualist, and in that respect find in it much to engage attention and engender profitable thought. Much light is thrown on the intimate connection between the occult knowledge of all ages and all peoples—parts, as it were, of one great whole. But we cannot refrain from remarking that the line of argument which, finding parallelisms and foreshadowings of Christian rite, doctrine, and belief in other faiths, jumps to the conclusion that they are only true, and Christianity is only false, is apt to lead one into difficulties. The argument *may* and often does prove too much. We fully recognise the value of much that Mr. Oxley has written; his facts are good; in many instances his deductions are fair and legitimate; and our points of difference, dealing as they do with matters hardly allied to the object of this journal, we are not called upon to discuss here. We wish the book a thorough success.

MONEY CHALLENGES.—Since we wrote the note which appears in the previous column, Signor Damiani has offered to prove to Mr. Labouchere that the so-called dead return by means of materialisations. No offer more unwise could, in our opinion, have been made. If a man is unprepared to investigate psychography, he is ten thousand times less ready to examine the most delicate and occult of all phases of psychical phenomena. We regret being obliged to differ, and that on *all grounds*, and in the most emphatic manner, from Signor Damiani; but the course suggested by him can, we believe, only lead to incalculable harm, and our duty as spiritualist journalists demands a strong protest against it. We shall return to the question next week, and, in the meantime, invite our readers to favour us with their views on the matter.

All Communications to be addressed to

THE EDITOR OF "LIGHT."

4, AVE MARIA LANE,  
LONDON, E.C.

#### TO CONTRIBUTORS.

Reports of the proceedings of Spiritualist Societies in as succinct a form as possible, and authenticated by the signature of a responsible officer, are solicited for insertion in "LIGHT." Members of private circles will also oblige by contributing brief records of noteworthy occurrences at their sances.

The Editor cannot undertake the return of manuscripts unless the writers expressly request it at the time of forwarding and enclose stamps for the return Postage.

#### SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

The Annual Subscription for "LIGHT," post free to any address within the United Kingdom, or to places comprised within the Postal Union, including all parts of Europe, the United States, and British North America, is 10s. 10d. per annum, forwarded to our office in advance.

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Five lines and under, 3s. One inch, 4s. 6d. Column, £2 2s. Page £4. A reduction made for a series of insertions.

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#### NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC.

"LIGHT" may also be obtained from E. W. ALLEN, 4, Ave Maria-lane, London, and all Booksellers.

#### NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS.

Subscriptions for 1885 are now due. Subscribers will oblige by forwarding these at once to "The Manager of 'LIGHT,'" 4, Ave Maria-lane, E.C. Post Office Orders may be made payable to Henry Barnes. All Editorial Correspondence to be addressed to "The Editor."

**Light:**

SATURDAY, JANUARY 24TH, 1885.

### THE "CREDULOUS DOLTS" OF SPIRITUAL INVESTIGATION.

There is a belief among many persons that those individuals who have investigated and become convinced of the facts of spiritual communication are of feeble intelligence, easily deluded and imposed upon, ready to accept as facts the simplest tricks of a conjurer, and quite unfitted to judge when evidence is placed before them. Persons who have formed these conclusions are usually those who have never investigated or witnessed any spiritual phenomena. They have seen imitations of them, such, for example, as are presented at the Egyptian Hall, and called an *exposé* of Spiritualism; or they see a man tied with rope in the streets, and when this man frees himself they exclaim that this exposes the Davenport Brothers' tricks, and they then wonder at the folly of those who have been imposed on by mediums.

In a certain weekly paper, a writer who evidently possesses no knowledge or experience of facts, lately stated that the manner in which a "spirit-hand" was produced was as follows: "A stuffed glove was used to represent the spirit-hand. The medium sat between two inquirers, holding a hand of each; he then slipped away, and made the inquirers hold their hands, they all the time imagining they were holding the medium, and so the trick is done."

When we see statements of this kind put forward we are convinced that there are some types of mind quite incapable of investigating any problems or evidence requiring intensity of intelligence. These minds are like those of the police agent, in Edgar Poe's amusing tale, who failed to find the purloined letter; or they are like a savage, who could not distinguish between a diamond and the imitation exhibited in the Palais Royal.

The fact really is, that not one mind in fifty is capable of investigating any problem requiring great sub-

tlety of intellect. Prejudice and pre-conceived opinions rule the average of minds, and conclusions are formed from these, instead of from the facts and evidence which can be obtained.

The history of the opposition offered to discoveries affords endless examples of this fact. When the proof or demonstration required high-class intelligence to comprehend it, this proof was usually rejected or ignored, and it was so ignored by the men who were, from their previous training supposed to be well qualified as judges.

When people read about the contemptible nonsense that was written by so-called learned men to prove that the earth could not rotate, and that those persons who believed it did rotate were either fools or impostors, they usually congratulate themselves on living in an age when common-sense and science prevail, and when such twaddle would never even appear in print. Contemptible, however, as were the arguments urged in olden times against novel truths, they were comparatively sound and logical compared to much that has been written lately in order to prove that the so-called spiritual phenomena are all the result of trickery. The way it is done is as follows: The medium slips away from between two investigators, joins these investigators' hands, they all the time believing they are holding the medium. The medium flourishes about a stuffed glove, and lo! it is a spirit-hand. Let us see now who are these imbeciles who have been thus tricked. There is Robert Houdin, the great French conjurer; Professor Jacobs, the conjurer; Samuel Bellachini, Court conjurer at Berlin; Louis Napoleon, Professor Crookes, Professor Varley, Alfred R. Wallace, Dr. Elliotson, Professor de Morgan, Dr. Gregory, Professor Zollner, the late Emperor of Russia, the Prince of Solms, President Lincoln, and thousands of other men of a similar class of mind.

These men devoted months and years to the investigations. They commenced with the usual doubts and suspicions, but after long and careful experience were obliged to admit that the facts existed, and the only theory which satisfactorily explained these facts was the spiritual theory.

But what do all these investigations matter to the man who knows everything without ever having investigated? That a steamship could not possibly cross the Atlantic was well-known to a certain (so-called) scientific man, and people who believed it could so cross were fools, in this man's opinion. He had never thoroughly examined the facts, it is true, but what did he care for that? His profound knowledge enabled him to pronounce a verdict without examining, and those people who had examined and had arrived at a different conclusion were to be sneered at.

We have similar classes of minds in the present day belonging to men who can sit in their back offices and write articles of a similar class, showing that stuffed gloves and fools, or dupes, will explain the whole affair. Now such remarks should be treasured. Facts will prevail in spite of the opposition of such arrogant ignorance, and in the future these remarks will be valuable as examples of the class of minds which influenced, to a certain extent, public opinion; and future generations will then hold up such men to the ridicule they deserve, and will speak of the dark age of 1885, when such nonsense was received as a proof of the great mental power of the writers.

A.

MR. STANTON MOSES is anxious to gather in all books, MSS., extracts from newspapers, and the like which may have been borrowed from him by friends, and have not been yet returned. He will be much obliged by any such being returned to him at 21, Birchington-road, N.W., with the least possible delay.

MR. JOHN RUMBLE, a "South London Working Man," writes to us in grateful terms of Mr. Eglinton's kindness in giving him and a friend an opportunity of witnessing the phenomenon of psychography. They were very successful in their experiments, and Mr. Eglinton will, we are sure, be glad to know that his kindness has been thoroughly appreciated by them.



## SPAIN.

The Annual General Meeting of Spiritualists at Tarassa has issued a tract for distribution, entitled *Verdades* (Truths). It has also established a fund in aid of old and infirm Spiritualists.

The Spiritualist circles of Marressa have collectively published a pamphlet, and distributed it freely in the district, replying in moderate language to the misrepresentations of Spiritism and Spiritualism by one of the dignitaries of the Cathedral of Marressa.

*El Faro Spiritista* is the title of a new publication at Barcelona. In its first number it says: "We shall be guided by ideas based upon rational Spiritism, and the morality of the Gospel. Let none expect from us exalted scientific discussion nor high literature: we are of the people and propose to write for the people." It informs its readers that *El Lazo de Union* is the title of a Spiritist Society now established in the Antilles, thus completing the circle of Spiritual Societies round the world.—*Le Spiritisme*.

## "LIGHT" SUSTENTATION FUND.

	£	s.	d.
Amount already announced ...	275	5	0
The Misses Ponder (second donation) ...	5	0	0
Miss Cowley ...	2	10	0
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A Friend at Birmingham ...	1	0	0
A Friend ...	0	5	0

Remittances may be sent either to Mr. E. Dawson Rogers, Rose Villa, Church End, Finchley, N.; or to Mr. Morell Theobald, 62, Granville Park, Lewisham, S.E.

## A BARRISTER'S PLAN FOR THE DISSEMINATION OF SPIRITUAL LITERATURE.

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Those marked \* are annual subscriptions if required.

"A Barrister" ...	£25	0	0
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A. M. ...	0	10	6

Total amount required £250. Promises may be sent to Editor of "LIGHT," 4, Ave Maria-lane, E.C.

**THE CHROMO PLATES.**—In answer to inquiries, we wish to state that we did not announce the publication of these plates for any special date in January. We simply advertised their issue during the current month. The artist has found more time requisite than he at first thought would be necessary, but we hope not to be compelled to request any extension of time. They will appear as a supplement to "LIGHT," gratis (for subscribers only), very shortly. Those friends who have their copies of "LIGHT" sent direct from this office will receive them in the usual course; but subscribers who obtain this journal through any other channel will have to apply for the plates in the terms of our previous announcement. No application will be considered after the 31st inst. After that date the pictures will only be obtainable on payment.

We understand that Mr. W. Eglinton has made arrangements to leave London about the middle of February on a short visit to a distinguished person in Vienna, from which city he will afterwards proceed to Hamburg on the invitation of a scientific committee appointed to investigate the phenomena occurring in his presence. He will also stay a few days in Paris, and will probably remain for a short period at The Hague on his return journey. Mr. Eglinton, however, has made these movements conditional upon his not being wanted in London in connection with the recent controversy, as it is his intention not to give his assailants the slightest ground for attack on the pretence that he has by his absence from London shirked any issue which may be raised. The change will give him a much-needed rest after the strain he has undergone during the past month or two.

## THE PALL MALL GAZETTE CORRESPONDENCE ON SPIRITUALISM.

We quote the two following letters addressed to the *Pall Mall Gazette*, as they form a fitting and complete answer to the vulgar communication of Professor Ray Lankester already published. *Mr. Eglinton's letter was, however, most unjustly refused insertion!*

To the EDITOR of the PALL MALL GAZETTE.

SIR,—It is difficult to believe Professor Ray Lankester so ignorant as he must be if his letter to you is honest. But he may impose, in either case, on others innocently unacquainted with the facts. He certainly is notorious for having "prosecuted" Slade; but he never "caught him in the act" of cheating. The magistrate, Flowers, said the evidence for the defence in that case was "overwhelming," but he excluded it from consideration, and based his decision, very strangely, on "inferences to be drawn from the known course of nature." Persecuted by ignorant hostility, Slade was convicted by a tribunal incapable of adapting itself to unfamiliar problems. Serious inquirers with open minds knew all the while, by scores, that the writing on Slade's slates was produced by some abnormal agency, and not by cheating on his part. When he escaped, through a legal flaw in the decision, from the penalty so shamefully awarded to him, Slade, through a friend, wrote from The Hague to Lankester, generously crediting him with good motives for what he had done, and showing no indignation, but offering to return to London, to visit the persecutor at his own house, to sit with him at his own table with his own slates, and convince him that the writing which would come upon them was not produced by trickery. Professor Lankester never answered this letter, thereby earning the deep and lasting contempt of every earnest inquirer into certain mysteries of nature of which the slate-writing under notice, trivial as its character often is, and wrong as Spiritualists may be in interpreting it, is certainly a casual manifestation. Intellectual ruffians who persecute spiritual mediums from bigoted hatred of the inquiries in which these persons are instrumental do mischief in two ways. With the help of clumsy laws, ill qualified to cope with questions concerning mediumship, they first of all bring about much horrible injustice. Secondly, they impede the growth of knowledge; for, though the more emotional Spiritualists cling to their persecuted faith more tenaciously than ever, the world at large is misled into supposing the bullies of Materialism to have proved (when they have merely won) their cases. I have used strong language in this letter, not because I like to do so as a rule, but because Professor Lankester's conduct in this matter has always seemed to me peculiarly despicable. In pluming himself upon it now, after he ought to have grown ashamed of it, by the light of later experience gathered by wiser men, his audacity claims a straightforward reply.—I am, sir, your obedient servant,

A. P. SINNETT.

Ladbroke-gardens, Kensington Park, W.

To the EDITOR of the PALL MALL GAZETTE.

SIR,—As there seems to be no prospect of Signor Damiani and Mr. Labouchere coming to terms, I trust you will do me the justice of allowing me to remind your readers that I have not shrunk in any way from a fair investigation of the abnormal phenomena which occur in my presence. Since you did me the honour of inserting my letter in reply to Mr. Cumberland, the discussion of the question has entered upon another phase, and there is some danger of the fact being overlooked that I accepted Mr. Cumberland's challenge, stipulating only that the money element should be eliminated, and proposing that a committee of six gentlemen should be chosen, three by myself and three by the other side; that the committee should have six meetings for experiment; and that if their experiments were successful they should report the fact to Mr. Cumberland, should call upon him, in accordance with his promise, to "explain away such demonstrations by natural means," and should require him to reproduce the same phenomena under the same conditions. To this offer on my part Mr. Cumberland has never replied.

And yet it has been coolly assumed by some of your correspondents that I am simply an impostor; that the phenomena are jugglers' tricks; and that I am afraid to allow them to be put to the test by competent observers. Mr. Ray Lankester, indeed, goes so far as to indulge in such epithets as "Sludge," "pickpocket," "unsavoury specimen of natural history,"

"vermin," "skunk," &c. I am not going to imitate Mr. Ray Lankester. I refer to his language only to point out that this is the sort of gentleman that I am taunted with being unwilling to meet; and of whom I am asked to believe that he would enter upon an inquiry with perfectly unbiassed minds and quite open to conviction! I have no intention, sir, to waste my time with such men, or indeed with any who have publicly committed themselves to a hostile attitude without having ever attempted an honest and patient investigation of the phenomena and of the conditions under which they are produced. And I have no occasion for doing so, because my perfect rectitude in the matter, and my absolute freedom from any active part in the production of the slate-writing manifestations, have been abundantly testified by men the eminence of whose position in the scientific world even Mr. Ray Lankester himself would not venture to question for a single moment.

If it be urged that professional conjurers would be better observers than even men of science, then I reply that some of the most accomplished conjurers of the age have assured themselves of the genuineness of the phenomena.

Professor Jacobs, writing to the editor of *Licht, mehr Licht*, April 10th, 1881, in reference to phenomena which occurred in Paris through the Brothers Davenport, said, "As a prestidigitateur of repute, and a sincere Spiritualist, I affirm that the medianimic facts demonstrated by the two brothers, were absolutely true and belonged to the spiritualistic order of things in every respect. Messrs. Robin and Robert Houdin, when attempting to imitate these said facts, never presented to the public anything beyond an infantine and almost grotesque parody of the said phenomena."

Samuel Bellaachini, Court Conjurer at Berlin, made a sworn declaration on the 6th December, 1877, in which he said, after describing his investigations with Dr. Slade, "I have not in the smallest degree found anything to be produced by means of prestidigitative manifestations, or by mechanical apparatus, and any explanation of the experiments which took place under the circumstances and conditions then obtaining by any reference to prestidigitation is absolutely impossible."

Harry Kellar, a distinguished professor of legerdemain, happened to be giving his entertainments in Calcutta while I was there in the early part of 1882, and he addressed a letter to the *Indian Daily News*, in which he said that he should like to investigate the slate-writing phenomena in my presence. As I was assured that he was in every respect a gentleman, and would bring an honest and impartial mind to the inquiry, I consented to meet him. On the 25th January he wrote to the *Indian Daily News* as follows: "In your issue of the 13th January, I stated that I should be glad of an opportunity of participating in a *débat* with a view of giving an unbiassed opinion as to whether, in my capacity of a professional prestidigitateur, I could give a natural explanation of effects said to be produced by spiritual aid. I am indebted to the courtesy of Mr. Eglinton, now in Calcutta, and of his host, Mr. J. Meugens, for affording me the opportunity I craved. It is needless to say I went as a sceptic, but I must own that I have come away utterly unable to explain, by any natural means, the phenomena that I witnessed. . . . I can only say that I do not expect my account of them to gain general credence. Forty-eight hours before I should not have believed any one who described such manifestations under similar circumstances. . . . I repeat my inability to explain or account for what must have been an intelligent force that produced the writing on the slate, which, if my senses are to be relied on, was in no way the result of trickery or sleight of hand."

Now that you have kindly allowed me to place these facts before your readers, they will readily understand how it is that I am not greatly moved either by the violent language of Mr. Ray Lankester, or by the absurdly grotesque revelations of *Truth* as to "How it is done!" I can bide my time. The facts will be acknowledged some day, when prejudice has grown tired of its vain attempts to strangle them.

Yours respectfully,

11, Langham-street, W.  
January 20th, 1885.

W. EGLINTON.

"M. A. (Oxon)."—We learn that "M. A. (Oxon)" is still confined to his bed, and in great pain. He is quite unable to reply to letters or attend to business of any kind. The virulence of the disease seems, however, to be abating, and the paroxysms, though not less frequent, are less violent. The course pursued by the disease is quite free from complication. The patient is very weak and much pulled down.

## THE PUBLIC DISCUSSION OF SPIRITUALISM.

BY FRANK PODMORE, M.A.

As Mr. Theobald has, in the last number of "LIGHT," referred, in somewhat misleading terms, to recent remarks of mine, I will ask you to insert the correction which he has challenged. Mr. Theobald represents me as having said that "the ghosts are subjective, and not objective." In the speech to which he refers, I expressly refrained from making use of the words "subjective" and "objective," because I think that, used in this connection, they only serve to darken counsel. Nor did I venture—as Mr. Theobald implies—to affirm anything categorically on the matter. I merely put forward a tentative explanation—and I was at some pains to make it clear that the explanation was merely a tentative and provisional one—of certain apparitions, the occurrence of which I regard as fully proved, viz., apparitions seen coincidently with exceptional crises in the life of the person whom they resemble. That explanation is, that the mental disturbance accompanying (*e.g.*) the approach of death may be communicated to the mind of some friend, and—in accordance with the experimental analogy of thought-transference—may give rise to a thought of the dying person; and that this thought, abnormal in its origin, may also be abnormal in its manifestation, and may appear for a moment to be part of the external world—in short, an "apparition:" but while the *cause* of the "apparition" is external, the precise *form* which it assumes is determined by the mind of the percipient, being, in fact, nothing more than an abnormal intensification of the mental imagery which, in ordinary minds, accompanies the thought of any concrete object. But not only did I disclaim any belief on my own part in this hypothesis as a final and sufficient explanation of the facts, but I even stated that it was inadequate to explain many facts within my own knowledge. For a full explanation of these further facts I added that I was content to wait.

As regards the phenomena of Spiritualism, I said that I could not at present regard most of the alleged facts, as sufficiently proved; and it was this remark of mine which has, apparently, furnished Mr. Theobald with a text for his homily. But, in saying this, I was not ignorant of the surprising occurrences which Mr. Theobald has so often and so circumstantially described in these columns. Indeed, I may claim that in some respects my knowledge in this matter is greater than that of most readers of "LIGHT," and is equalled only by Mr. Theobald's own: for I am in possession of certain facts—not hitherto published, though known, as I understand, to Mr. Theobald—which appear to me to throw some light on the genesis of these marvellous phenomena. This is not the time for detailing these additional facts at length; but perhaps I may be permitted to make a few comments on the Greek quotation which Mr. Theobald has given in "LIGHT" of the 17th inst. Mr. Theobald sent me the original spirit-writing a few weeks ago, and I thought it so interesting that I made a copy of that part of it which contained the Greek quotation. I have that copy before me now, and I should like to make a few remarks on it supplementary to Mr. Theobald's account of the matter.

I. In the first place, Mr. Theobald has omitted to mention that the spirit ascribed the quotation—which is *prose*, and could not be mistaken by the veriest tyro in Greek for anything else—to the first book of the *Odyssey*. Now the *Odyssey* is a *poem*; and the first book of the *Odyssey* contains no allusion to Ulysses' encounter with the Cyclops. That fact appears to me to possess some interest, and should, I think, have been stated.

II. In the second place, the word *μεν* (*men*), as I wrote



to Mr. Theobald at the time, is in an impossible position ; it is a word that cannot stand first in a sentence. Mr. Theobald, upon this, observes : "I apprehend the spirit can put it where it likes." Well, I guess it can. We may, no doubt, concede to a spirit a similar license to that which the "Duchess" claims for herself in "Through the Looking-Glass," when she expresses her determination to make words mean what she pleases. A spirit sees "with larger, other eyes than ours," and can perhaps look down upon the rules of grammar as "merely conventional signs."

III. In the third place, I observe that the Greek quotation is written very clearly, each letter having evidently been formed slowly and with considerable care. The writing is, moreover, fairly correct. It is, indeed, marvellously correct in view of the unquestionable fact that *it is the production of a person who was entirely ignorant of Greek*. My reasons for forming this conclusion are numerous. I have mentioned two of them ; I will briefly indicate others.

IV. The word which stands second in the sentence, *πρωτον* (*prōton*), is correctly printed in "LIGHT" (apparently from the transcript of the writing which I made for Mr. Theobald) ; but, as I wrote to Mr. Theobald, it is mis-spelt in the original. "Mis-spelt" is hardly the correct term, for the first two letters of the word are not Greek at all, and do not form part of the alphabet of any language with which I am acquainted. Perhaps they are Persian.

V. The third word, *Ουτω* (*Outo*), is also mis-spelt. It should be *Ουτω* (*Outin*). The mistake is a natural one for an ignorant copyist, but an impossible one for a Greek scholar.

VI. The word *Οδυσσειν* (*Odussuin*) is wrongly spelt. The correct form is *Οδυσεια* (*Odussea*) : but I entirely dissent from Mr. Theobald's statement that the word, as written by the spirit, "may end *ea* (*ea*)." The word is not quite clearly written : the final letter may be intended for either *υ* (*u*) or *ν* (*n*), but it cannot conceivably be intended for *a* : and the last letter but one is indubitably *υ* (*u*).

VII. The extreme care with which the letters have been formed enables one to distinguish certain characteristics in their shape which are foreign to Greek writing.

(a) The *alpha* is written like an English script, *α*. There is a peculiarity in the formation of the Greek *α* which is not always obvious in the printed type, but which is quite apparent in correct Greek writing, and which is wanting in *this* writing. This point, however, is not conclusive, as a careless or ill-taught Greek scholar will frequently form his *alphas* incorrectly.

(b) The *theta* is found, not as in ordinary Greek writing, *Θ*, but like a slovenly *8*.

(c) The *deltas* are formed in much the same way as the *theta*, except that the upper circle is left incomplete ; but this opening in the upper curved line occurs on the left side, whereas in correct Greek writing it occurs on the right, thus, *δ*. In one instance—the *δ* in the word *Οδυσσειν*—the union of the upper circle is complete, and the letter is a counterpart of the *theta*.

(d) Throughout the sentence (with one or two exceptions) the letters *υ* (*u*) and *ν* (*n*) are written precisely alike, in a neutral form, which might stand for either letter, but is on the whole more like *υ* (*u*). In one case this symbol takes the place of an *iota*, *ι* (*i*).

(e) The *beta* is formed, like an English *B*, by two separate strokes of the pen. In the Greek *β*, on the other hand, the straight side passes gradually into the curved lines which form the back of the letter, and the whole letter is formed by one stroke.

VIII. Lastly, the accents and the "breathings," or marks of aspiration, are, with one exception, omitted. In that one exception the mark is correctly inserted. I regret that I am unable to indicate the source from which the Greek quotation is derived ; possibly from some old commentary on the *Odyssey*. But, on the whole, I venture to think that this spirit did *not* know Greek.

London, 17th January, 1885

## THE SPIRITUAL OUTLOOK.

### XIII.

THE weekly paper called *Society*, in giving an uncommonly fair description of the slate-writing séances with Mr. Eglinton, mentions the fact that visitors, entire strangers to the medium, get communications in the handwriting of friends, under circumstances which utterly exclude the theory of fraud. As the materialised spirits of persons whom the medium never saw appear to their friends as natural as life, so as to be instantly and perfectly recognised, so the handwriting of spirits, compared with manuscripts written during life, would be identified by any judge of handwriting.

\* \* \*

*Science*—a magazine published in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and apparently written by undergraduates of its University, advocates Psychical Research in America as an antidote to Spiritualism. It says :—

"Spiritualism is an evil in the world,—in America it is a subtle and stupendous evil ; a secret and unacknowledged poison in many minds, a confessed disease in others,—a disease which is sometimes more repulsive to the untainted than leprosy. Spiritualism has two supports,—the first, trickery and deceit ; the second, the obscurity and inexplicableness of certain psychological processes and states."

If ever a sillier paragraph was printed in a profoundly scientific paper than the above, I should like to see it. What has science to do with the possible evils or dangers connected with any fact ? It might as well denounce gravitation because a badly built house may tumble down, or a tipsy man tumble into a gutter. It might as well find moral evil in some fact in chemistry or geology. There are bad men and women, and if they continue to exist after the change we call death, they may not suddenly change their qualities. Spiritualism simply proves their existence and power to produce sensible manifestations. Science registers facts and does not denounce them.

\* \* \*

THE American Society for Psychical Research, *Science* informs us : "Will try to steer safely between the Scylla of scoffing and the Charybdis of charlatan Spiritualism." But "why meddle with "charlatan Spiritualism" at all ? What can a Society for Research have to do with charlatanism, except to expose it, and whoever can find any "charlatan Spiritualism" and expose it will surely merit the thanks of all Spiritualists. The efforts of scientific men to examine Spiritualism in order to expose it have had, according to the late Mr. Varley, the uniform result of convincing them of its reality, so that there does not now exist one truly scientific man in the world who has seriously examined Spiritualism who is not a Spiritualist. If there be such a man, produce him. The scientific men who denounce Spiritualism as a falsehood, a delusion, or an imposture, do so upon *a priori* ground, and have never given the matter a scientific examination.

\* \* \*

ANTI-SPIRITUALISTS, here and there, display a detestable temper. Professor Ray Lankester, for example, in his recent letter has given utterance to one of the most unscientific outbursts of vulgar abuse I have seen since the poem of Browning in which he pilloried himself, while venting his jealous spite on "Sludge the mejum," and shamefully outraging a most lovely woman, held in many hearts as a greater as well as a better poet than himself—who was also a Spiritualist and a friend of D. D. Home.

\* \* \*

THE torrent of abuse from Professor Lankester, so happily answered and rebuked by Mr. Sinnett, has, however, brought back to public memory one conclusive fact—the offer of Slade to return from Holland to England, and sit with Professor Lankester, in his own house with his own friends, and satisfy him of the reality of the manifestations. A man refusing such an offer puts himself out of court. He declares a fact impossible, and shuts his eyes when invited to look at it—which is the most absurd attitude of every anti-Spiritualist.

\* \* \*

PERHAPS Mr. Labouchere, for one who makes no pretence to science, is a better example of the merely ignorant and prejudiced opponent of Spiritualism. He denounces every fact outside his own experience as imposture—even thought-reading and the commonest facts of mesmerism, because he considers them miraculous, and he holds with an un-

dying faith to the creed of Mr. Matthew Arnold that "miracles don't happen."

"SECULARISM," as held by its more prominent leaders, plants itself on this faith in "the laws of nature," in accordance with which the good Mr. Flowers sentenced Slade to be imprisoned three months as "a rogue and vagabond," when, as he admitted, the testimony in his favour was overwhelming. Sir Henry Hawkins did the same in a higher court, declaring that the testimony of a thousand Spiritualists, however respectable, would have no weight with him.

WHAT is to be done with men whose fanaticism of unbelief makes them refuse testimony, and who have no trust in their own powers of observation?—the men who resolutely shut their eyes and reject all testimony which is in conflict with preconceived opinions or vulgar prejudices?

OF course there is only one thing to do. It is to bring the facts to the knowledge of men of open minds, who have retained some faith in their own powers of observation. Spiritualism as a faith has pervaded the world from the remotest ages—how far the belief may have been based on observation we cannot tell. Spiritualism as a science based on carefully observed and recorded facts, is of our own time—a new element in human progress.

Now and then the exposers get exposed. They even expose each other. Irving Bishop denounces Stuart Cumberland, and Maskelyne has got a verdict of £10,000 damages against Irving Bishop for libelling him—as much as an actress gets for being robbed of an earl. If they vilify mediums they have the fairness to libel each other.

THE *Literary World*, noticing an article in the *British Quarterly* by Miss Gordon Cumming on the Chinese "Offerings of the Dead," gives the interesting fact that the universal belief in Spiritualism in China has an important influence in the administration of justice. Before sentencing a criminal the judge makes careful inquiry as to the relations and friends he may have in the spirit-world, who may wish to avenge any injustice done him, and governs himself accordingly—a man having influential friends in the spirit-world having similar advantages in China to those enjoyed in England, by one whose friends are still on this side of the veil that grows thinner and more transparent day by day.

"Our other griefs and miseries over the loss of our loved ones who go away from us through the sad portal of death, keen as they may be, are in time solaced by a wistful hope of reunion. What is that but a temporary separation, if they are awaiting us yonder with light on their faces?"—*Shandon Bells*.

This is a little bit of Spiritualism from a fashionable novel. Mr. Black may not have seen as much as the author of "Rienzi" did—but poets and romancers are not much if they are without this element, and the more they know the more effectively they can use the power of the invisible world to influence and mould the visible.

DR. NICHOLS, announced to give two discourses in Liverpool on Sunday, January 25th, has taken for his subjects—"Spiritualism: What it is," and "Spiritualism: What it does." One will be devoted to the facts and evidences; the other to its objects and uses. The intention is, of course, to cover, as well as can be done in two discourses, the whole ground of controversy, to meet those who say Spiritualism is not true, and if it were true what is the good of it?

So far as science is concerned, it is enough to demonstrate the reality of any fact. The usefulness of every truth may be accepted as a principle. But settling the great fact of immortality has a very wide range of uses. To know as a demonstrated fact that our conscious life will extend beyond the death of the body cannot fail to affect human character in proportion to the value we put on life. When one knows that he will live on and on, for ever and for ever, he is under intellectual compulsion to make his calculations accordingly.

WHAT the social influence of Spiritualism may be we have not yet had time to see. People cannot all at once get out of the ruts of custom and habit. The commonplaces of language will long fetter us. Our ghastly funerals and mourning for the

happy "dead" will continue as a fashion long after the great majority of the people have lost all dread of death, and all unpleasant feelings in regard to it.

THE natural, spontaneous customs of Scotland, which may have had something to do with second-sight phenomena, were sensible enough—except some possible excess in the drinking habits. A funeral feast of Spiritualists with music, flowers, and congratulations to the spirit of the departed, closing with the cremation of the useless casket of the free and happy spirit, would be infinitely more satisfactory than our black pageantries of woe.

SPIRITUALISM, to all who accept it, changes sorrow to joy. The house of mourning does not exist. Our friends come to us whenever they have the needed conditions, and assure us of their life, and love, and happiness. They adjure us not to mourn for them because there is no real separation—because we are so soon to join them. This one fact changes the whole aspect of human life. Death has no sting, the grave no victory. We know that our dead friends are not only alive, more than ever alive, but that they are within speaking distance.

"Take a million of people who are in the habit of dreaming, say once a week. Some are sure to dream about their relations, and some of their relations will die about the same time. Of course, there will happen coincidences—and these are the facts gathered by societies for Psychical Research." This is the way *Science* accounts for one class of facts: Why not apply the same rule to all others? History is full of errors; chemists make mistakes; astronomy has varying observations; geologists are at loggerheads; there are coincidences in natural history; but with so many observers they are easily accounted for. The senses are deceptive. Yes; but how does this argument apply to classes of facts observed and recorded for twenty or thirty years by thousands of observers—the facts of psychography, for example, where the written words remain for examination, giving documentary evidence of facts which admit of only one explanation? Science that ignores, or tries to explain away any fact, makes itself ridiculous.

#### TESTIMONY OF THE CELEBRATED ILLUSIONIST, ROBERT HOUDIN,

*To the Fact of Somnambule Lucidity (Clairvoyance).*

The following is a translation of two letters addressed by Robert Houdin, after thorough investigation with the somnambulist Alexis, to the Marquis Endes de Mirville, published by the latter, during the lifetime of Houdin, in his "Mémoire adressé à MM. les membres de l'Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques, sur un grand nombre de phénomènes merveilleux intéressant également la Religion, la Science, et les hommes du Monde." Paris, Vrayet de Surcy, 1853. (Des esprits et de leurs manifestations fluidique, the 1st Vol. of the author's "Pneumatologie.")

It should be premised that Robert Houdin had made the simulation of "second sight" a spécialité, in addition to his acknowledged pre-eminence in other species of illusion, and his exhaustive knowledge of all the resources of his fraternity.

M. de Mirville prefaces his statement as follows:—

"You all know Robert Houdin, and will concede to that king of prestidigitators as well the sceptre of skill, as consequently the most absolute competence to detect it in others.\*

"One day, then, this competence occurred to us *à propos* of the question in hand. Long perfectly convinced by our own experiences, we were weary of hearing our *esprits forts* of the drawing-room, and our *esprits faibles* of the Institute, rejecting evidence and cutting short all our assertions by these apparently specious words:—

"Robert Houdin does as much; he plays the same games of *carté*; he divines what you have in your pocket; he does

\*Robert Houdin is not, it is true, a member of the Institute, but he is well-known and respected there, and has friends in it; and in the section of mechanics it is always regretted that he did not follow up that first vocation to which he owed so many ingenious inventions. As to the personality and character of this true artist, we may remember the homage which, in a recent judicial case, an eminent magistrate, himself a member of the Academy of Sciences, was pleased publicly to render him.



more. Twenty times in an entertainment, or a hundred times if it is wished, you shall hand him so many visiting cards, and immediately, with the rapidity of lightning, without any hesitation (which is not the case with your somnambulists), his son, at the other end of the stage, will repeat your name, however queer it may be; your address, however distant it may be. He has even surpassed all that; for more than once he has been seen to read a name under a thick and concealed envelope; to penetrate by a glance to the bottom of a well-closed box; to designate a distant person by a lock of hair, &c., &c. What more do you want, and are you going to show us?"

"How reply to such arguments, the weakness of which one feels sooner than one can demonstrate it? Nothing is more true; Robert Houdin does all that, and does it, certainly, with a dexterity, an habitual skill which leaves far behind him the most lucid of our somnambulists. And though it is true that this constancy of success on the one side, and this uncertainty on the other, ought alone to suggest the different character of the phenomena, in Paris people jump to a conclusion (*on rent aller plus vite*) and ask: Why two causes, when one is enough?"

"It appeared that to make an end of this eternal and vicious argument, there was nothing for it but to go and find Houdin himself.

"No sooner thought than done, and here we are in his room, face to face with him."

Then follows a circumstantial account of M. de Mirville's visit to Houdin for the purpose of engaging him in this investigation, of the latter's confidence in his own ability to detect the trick, and of what took place at the séance, the conditions of which were entirely under Houdin's control. This account extends over twelve pages, and its accuracy is confirmed by Houdin in the first of the documents now translated:—

"Although very far from accepting the eulogies which M. — is good enough to bestow upon me, and especially insisting that I am not at all committed to opinions, either in favour of magnetism or against it, I can, nevertheless, not refrain from declaring that the facts above reported are entirely correct (*sont de la plus complète exactitude*), and that, the more I reflect upon them, the more impossible I find it to rank them among those which belong to my art and profession."

"ROBERT HOUDIN.

"4th May, 1847."

A fortnight later, M. de Mirville received the following letter:—

"Monsieur,—As I had the honour to tell you, I wished for a second séance, and that at which I was present yesterday at Marcillet's\* has been still more wonderful than the first, and leaves me no more in any doubt about the lucidity of Alexis. I went to this séance with the intention of watching well the game of écarté, which had so astonished me. I took much greater precautions this time than even on the first occasion; for, distrusting myself, I got one of my friends, qualified to assist my judgment, to accompany me.

"Here is what happened, and it will be seen that no subtleties were ever able to produce effects like that I am about to cite. I uncover a pack I had brought with me, and the cover of which I had marked, that it might not be changed. I shuffle; it is my deal. I deal with all the precautions of a man practised in the finesse of his art. Useless precautions! Alexis stops me, and indicating one of the cards which I had just placed before him on the table, 'I have the king,' he said.

"'But you can know nothing yet since the turn-up card has not come out.'

"'You will see,' he replied, 'Go on.'

"And in fact I turned up the eight of diamonds, and his own was the king of diamonds. The game continued in a manner sufficiently strange (*bizarre*), for he told me the cards I ought to play, although my cards were hidden under the table and clasped in my hands. To each of these cards played, he pushed one of his own without turning it up, and it was always found to be quite the right one for that which I had myself played.

"I have, therefore, returned from this séance as astonished as it is possible to be, and persuaded that it is utterly impossible that chance or skill could ever produce effects so wonderful (*tout à fait impossible que le hasard ou l'adresse puisse jamais produire des effets aussi merveilleux*).—I am, Monsieur, &c.

"(Signed), ROBERT HOUDIN."

"May 16th, 1847."

\* Marcillet was the "magnetiser" of Alexis.

## SPIRITUALISM IN LONDON & THE PROVINCES.

COMPLIMENTARY CONCERT TO MR. J. J. MORSE.—A complimentary concert to Mr. J. J. Morse was held at the Cavendish Rooms, Mortimer-street, on Wednesday evening, the 14th inst., under the conductorship of Dr. J. W. Bernhardt. The rooms were quite filled. As an expression of respect, and sympathy with Mr. Morse, the meeting was a success, and the utmost credit is due to Mrs. Maltby, the originator of the event. In the course of the evening Mr. R. Donaldson, on behalf of the late congregation of the Cavendish Rooms, and other friends, made a presentation of a purse of money (£27), and expressed the feelings of the meeting for Mr. Morse, his remarks being greeted with much emphasis by the audience. Mr. Morse made a feeling and earnest response, in effect acknowledging his indebtedness to all who had contributed to the gratifying success of the evening, and especially thanking Mrs. Maltby for her devoted and disinterested labours. Referring to his recent severe illness, he paid a manly tribute to the faithful devotion of his wife, to whose inspirations he was, in many ways, indebted for strength and help. He was more than satisfied with the support given to his late work, and was as delighted as he was astonished to find it had raised him such a troop of sympathetic and appreciative friends. But for that he thanked the spirits, whose servant he was. He also made special reference to the great and unvarying kindness he had received from the Spiritual Press, alike over the public work he was engaged in, and especially over the meeting then assembled. He trusted that, though he would soon be absent from them for some years, as, with his family, he intended visiting America, Australia, New Zealand, and the Cape, they would be as glad to see him on his return as they were sorry to part with him now, and with an earnest expression of the hope that not only as a medium, but as a man, he might ever hold a place in their esteem and a part in the great cause to which he had been for sixteen years devoted, Mr. Morse resumed his seat amidst sustained applause.

GLASGOW.—The Spiritualists of Glasgow have won martyrdom at an astonishingly cheap cost. Their increasing energy and liveliness have apparently become a cause for some concern to those mutual friends, Mrs. Grundy and the Rev. Dr. "Unco" Guid, who must have made up their minds to do something "to put a stop to this sort of thing." And they have been calling upon the editor or manager of the *Glasgow Herald*, an organ which is ever heedful of the monitions of respectability in the shape and character of the two personages referred to, with the result that the weekly advertisement which notified Spiritualists and inquirers of the speaker at the Spiritualists' Hall and subject each Sunday evening, is henceforward debarred from taking its place amongst the usual "religious announcements." Of course the advertisement may be inserted under the heading of "Public Notices," but in that case the charge is nearly double; for the *Herald* is desirous of assisting Sunday piety by arranging to give publicity to "Church Notices" in the Saturday issue at a cheap rate. Laxity, however, has characterised the management of this column hitherto; for all sorts and conditions of sects, not even excepting Mormons and Secularists, have been permitted a place therein. But now the line must needs be drawn somewhere, and it is drawn at—Spiritualism! At the forenoon meeting last Sunday, —a conversational meeting—part was taken therein by the guides of Mr. E. W. Wallis and of Mr. D. Anderson, a local medium of some promise; also by several members of the Society then present. The subject was "Truth v. Expediency." In the evening the platform was taken by Mr. Wallis, whose guides spoke on the question of "How are the dead raised up?" The hall was overcrowded. The address was admirably delivered. All that the Spiritual philosophy teaches, all that the quickened eye of clairvoyance has discerned, in regard to this deeply interesting question—the gist thereof—was disclosed by the guides on this occasion. Strangers must have been astonished at the doctrine—edified, too, let us hope.—ST. MUNGO.

PLYMOUTH.—On Sunday, January 4th, a special meeting of members was held at the hall, after the usual service, to elect officers for the ensuing year. The following were unanimously elected: President, Mr. J. B. Sloman; Vice-Presidents, Messrs. O. Stentiford and H. Pearce; Treasurer, Mr. Jutson; Librarian, Mr. Larcombe; Harmoniumist, Mr. Frank; Secretary, Mr. J. Paynter. Committee: Messrs. Thomas, Chapman, Jess, Best, Husson, Dellow, Frank, Williams, and Clarke. Six new members were added to the Society. On Sunday the usual circle was held in the afternoon with good results. In the evening there was a large attendance, when the guides of Mr. Carswell gave an excellent address on "Religions." Mrs. Trueman gave clairvoyant descriptions at the close. Mrs. Chapman was also controlled to speak. On Sunday next Mr. Morse will lecture for the Society at 3 p.m. and 6.30 p.m.—J. L. B. PAYNTER, Hon. Sec., 7 Buckland-street, Plymouth.

## ADVICE TO INQUIRERS.

The Conduct of Circles.—By M.A. (Oxon.)

If you wish to see whether Spiritualism is really only jugglery and imposture, try it by personal experiment.

If you can get an introduction to some experienced Spiritualist, on whose good faith you can rely, ask him for advice; and, if he is holding private circles, seek permission to attend one to see how to conduct sances, and what to expect.

There is, however, difficulty in obtaining access to private circles, and, in any case, you must rely chiefly on experiences in your own family circle, or amongst your own friends, all strangers being excluded. The bulk of Spiritualists have gained conviction thus.

Form a circle of from four to eight persons, half, or at least two, of negative, passive temperament, and preferably of the female sex the rest of a more positive type.

Sit, positive and negative alternately, secure against disturbance, in subdued light, and in comfortable and unconstrained positions, round an uncovered table of convenient size. Place the palms of the hands flat upon its upper surface. The hands of each sitter need not touch those of his neighbour, though the practice is frequently adopted.

Do not concentrate attention too fixedly on the expected manifestations. Engage in cheerful but not frivolous conversation. Avoid dispute or argument. Scepticism has no deterrent effect, but a bitter spirit of opposition in a person of determined will may totally stop or decidedly impede manifestations. If conversation flags, music is a great help, if it be agreeable to all, and not of a kind to irritate the sensitive ear. Patience is essential; and it may be necessary to meet ten or twelve times, at short intervals, before anything occurs. If after such trial you still fail, form a fresh circle. Guess at the reason of your failure, eliminate the inharmonious elements, and introduce others. An hour should be the limit of an unsuccessful sance.

The first indications of success usually are a cold breeze passing over the hands, with involuntary twitching of the hands and arms of some of the sitters, and a sensation of throbbing in the table. These indications, at first so slight as to cause doubt as to their reality, will usually develop with more or less rapidity.

If the table moves, let your pressure be so gentle on its surface that you are sure you are not aiding its motions. After some time you will probably find that the movement will continue if your hands are held over, but not in contact with it. Do not, however, try this until the movement is assured, and be in no hurry to get messages.

When you think that the time has come, let some one take command of the circle and act as spokesman. Explain to the unseen Intelligence that an agreed code of signals is desirable, and ask that a tilt may be given as the alphabet is slowly repeated at the several letters which form the word that the Intelligence wishes to spell. It is convenient to use a single tilt for No, three for Yes, and two to express doubt or uncertainty.

When a satisfactory communication has been established, ask if you are rightly placed, and if not, what order you should take. After this, ask who the Intelligence purports to be, which of the company is the medium, and such relevant questions. If confusion occurs, ascribe it to the difficulty that exists in directing the movements at first with exactitude. Patience will remedy this, if there be a real desire on the part of the Intelligence to speak with you. If you only satisfy yourself at first that it is possible to speak with an Intelligence separate from that of any person present, you will have gained much.

The signals may take the form of raps. If so, use the same code of signals, and ask as the raps become clear that they may be made on the table, or in a part of the room where they are demonstrably not produced by any natural means, but avoid any vexatious imposition of restrictions on free communication. Let the Intelligence use its own means; if the attempt to communicate deserves your attention, it probably has something to say to you, and will resent being hampered by useless interference. It rests greatly with the sitters to make the manifestations elevating or frivolous, and even tricky.

Should an attempt be made to entrance the medium, or to manifest by any violent methods, or by means of form manifestations, ask that the attempt may be deferred till you can secure the presence of some experienced Spiritualist. If this request is not heeded, discontinue the sitting. The process of developing a trance-medium is one that might disconcert an inexperienced inquirer. Increased light will check noisy manifestations.

Lastly. Try the results you get by the light of Reason. Maintain a level head and a clear judgment. Do not believe everything you are told, for though the great unseen world contains many a wise and discerning spirit, it also has in it the accumulation of human folly, vanity, and error; and this lies nearer to the surface than that which is wise and good. Distrust the free use of great names. Never for a moment abandon the use of your reason. Do not enter into a very solemn investigation in a spirit of idle curiosity or frivolity. Cultivate a reverent desire for what is pure, good, and true. You will be repaid if you gain only a well-grounded conviction that there is a life after death, for which a pure and good life before death is the best and wisest preparation.

## TESTIMONY TO PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

The following is a list of eminent persons who, after personal investigation, have satisfied themselves of the reality of some of the phenomena generally known as Psychical or Spiritualistic.

N.B.—An asterisk is prefixed to those who have exchanged belief for knowledge.

SCIENCE.—The Earl of Crawford and Balcarres, F.R.S., President R.A.S.; W. Crookes, Fellow and Gold Medallist of the Royal Society; C. Varley, F.R.S., C.E.; A. R. Wallace, the eminent Naturalist; W. F. Barrett, F.R.S.E., Professor of Physics in the Royal College of Science, Dublin; Dr. Lockhart Robertson; \*Dr. J. Elliotson, F.R.S., sometime President of the Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society of London; \*Professor de Morgan, sometime President of the Mathematical Society of London; \*Dr. Wm. Gregory, F.R.S.E., sometime Professor of Chemistry in the University of Edinburgh; \*Dr. Ashburner, \*Mr. Rutter, \*Dr. Herbert Mayo, F.R.S., &c., &c.

\*Professor F. Zöllner, of Leipzig, author of "Transcendental Physics," &c.; Professors G. T. Fechner, Scheibner, and J. H. Fichte, of Leipzig; Professor W. E. Weber, of Göttingen; Professor Hoffman, of Würzburg; Professor Perty, of Berne; Professors Wagner and Butleroff, of Petersburg; Professors Hare and Mapes, of U.S.A.; Dr. Robert Friese, of Breslau; Mons. Camille Flammarion, Astronomer, &c., &c.

LITERATURE.—The Earl of Dunraven; T. A. Trollope; S. C. Hall; Gerald Massey; Captain R. Burton; Professor Cassal, LL.D.; \*Lord Brougham; \*Lord Lytton; \*Lord Lyndhurst; \*Archbishop Whately; \*Dr. R. Chambers, F.R.S.E.; \*W. M. Thackeray; \*Nassau Senior; \*George Thompson; \*W. Howitt; \*Serjeant Cox; \*Mrs. Browning; Hon. Roden Noel, &c., &c.

Bishop Clarke, Rhode Island, U.S.A.; Darius Lyman, U.S.A.; Professor W. Denton; Professor Alex. Wilder; Professor Hiram Corson; Professor George Bush; and twenty-four Judges and ex-Judges of the U.S. Courts; Victor Hugo; Baron and Baroness von Vay; \*W. Lloyd Garrison, U.S.A.; \*Hon. R. Dale Owen, U.S.A.; \*Hon. J. W. Edmonds, U.S.A.; \*Epe Sargent; \*Baron du Potet; \*Count A. de Gasparin; \*Baron L. de Guldenstübbe, &c., &c.

SOCIAL POSITION.—H. I. H. Nicholas, Duke of Leuchtenberg; H. S. H. the Prince of Solms; H. S. H. Prince Albrecht of Solms; \*H. S. H. Prince Emile of Sayn Wittgenstein; Hon. Alexander Aksakof, Imperial Councillor of Russia; the Hon. J. L. O'Sullivan, sometime Minister of U.S.A. at the Court of Lisbon; M. Favre-Clavairoz, late Consul-General of France at Trieste; the late Emperors of \*Russia and \*France; Presidents \*Thiers and \*Lincoln, &c., &c.

## IS IT CONJURING?

It is sometimes confidently alleged that mediums are only clever conjurers, who easily deceive the simple-minded and unwary. But how, then, about the conjurers themselves, some of the most accomplished of whom have declared that the "manifestations" are utterly beyond the resources of their art?

ROBERT HOUDIN, the great French conjurer, investigated the subject of clairvoyance with the sensitive, Alexis Didier. In the result he unreservedly admitted that what he had observed was wholly beyond the resources of his art to explain. See *Psychische Studien* for January, 1878, p. 43.

PROFESSOR JACOBS, writing to the editor of *Licht, Mehr Licht*, April 10th, 1881, in reference to phenomena which occurred in Paris through the Brothers Davenport, said:—"As a Prestidigitator of repute, and a sincere Spiritualist, I affirm that the medianic facts demonstrated by the two brothers were absolutely true, and belonged to the Spiritualistic order of things in every respect. Messrs. Robin and Robert Houdin, when attempting to imitate these said facts, never presented to the public anything beyond an infantine and almost grotesque parody of the said phenomena, and it would be only ignorant and obstinate persons who could regard the questions seriously as set forth by these gentlemen. . . . Following the data of the learned chemist and natural philosopher, Mr. W. Crookes, of London, I am now in a position to prove plainly, and by purely scientific methods, the existence of a 'psychic force' in mesmerism, and also the individuality of the spirit 'in spiritual manifestation.'"

SAMUEL BELLACHINI, COURT CONJURER AT BERLIN.—I hereby declare it to be a rash action to give decisive judgment upon the objective medial performance of the American medium, Mr. Henry Slade, after only one sitting and the observations so made. After I had, at the wish of several highly esteemed gentlemen of rank and position, and also for my own interest, tested the physical mediumship of Mr. Slade, in a series of sittings by full daylight, as well as in the evening in his bedroom, I must, for the sake of truth, hereby certify that the phenomenal occurrences with Mr. Slade have been thoroughly examined by me with the minutest observation and investigation of his surroundings, including the table, and that I have not in the smallest degree found anything to be produced by means of prestidigitative manifestations, or by mechanical apparatus; and that any explanation of the experiments which took place under the circumstances and conditions then obtaining by any reference to prestidigitation is absolutely impossible. It must rest with such men of science as Crookes and Wallace, in London; Perty, in Berne; Butleroff, in St. Petersburg, to search for the explanation of this phenomenal power, and to prove its reality. I declare, moreover, the published opinions of laymen as to the "How" of this subject to be premature, and, according to my view and experience, false and one-sided. This, my declaration, is signed and executed before a notary and witnesses.—(Signed) SAMUEL BELLACHINI, Berlin, December 6th, 1877.